



# UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE  
United States Patent and Trademark Office  
Address: COMMISSIONER FOR PATENTS  
P.O. Box 1450  
Alexandria, Virginia 22313-1450  
www.uspto.gov

APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/065,286	09/30/2002	Christian A. Beck	F-380	5702

919 7590 07/15/2003

PITNEY BOWES INC.  
35 WATERVIEW DRIVE  
P.O. BOX 3000  
MSC 26-22  
SHELTON, CT 06484-8000

EXAMINER

ROGERS, DAVID A

ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
----------	--------------

2856

DATE MAILED: 07/15/2003

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

# Office Action Summary

Applicati n No.

10/065,286

Applicant(s)

BECK, CHRISTIAN A.

Examiner

David A. Rogers

Art Unit

2856

-- The MAILING DATE of this communicati n app ars on the c ver sheet with the c rrespondence address --

## Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133).
- Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

## Status

- 1) ☐ Responsive to communication(s) filed on \_\_\_\_\_.
- 2a) ☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

## Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-7 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1-7 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

## Application Papers

- 9) ☒ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☒ The drawing(s) filed on 23 January 2003 is/are: a) ☒ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
- Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
- 11) ☐ The proposed drawing correction filed on \_\_\_\_\_ is: a) ☐ approved b) ☐ disapproved by the Examiner.
- If approved, corrected drawings are required in reply to this Office action.
- 12) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner.

## Priority under 35 U.S.C. §§ 119 and 120

- 13) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some \* c) ☐ None of:
1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. \_\_\_\_\_.
3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).
- \* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.
- 14) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(e) (to a provisional application).
- a) ☐ The translation of the foreign language provisional application has been received.
- 15) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. §§ 120 and/or 121.

## Attachment(s)

- 1) ☒ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
- 2) ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
- 3) ☐ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449) Paper No(s) \_\_\_\_\_.
- 4) ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413) Paper No(s). \_\_\_\_\_.
- 5) ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
- 6) ☐ Other: \_\_\_\_\_.

## **DETAILED ACTION**

### ***Specification***

1. The disclosure is objected to because of the following informalities. There are several typographical errors that need to be corrected, including the letter "T" in paragraph 0001 and 0003. The reference numeral "7" should be replaced with "90" on paragraph 0047, line 7. Appropriate correction is required.

### ***Claim Objections***

2. Claims 1-6 are objected to because of the following informality. The first character of each claim is incorrect. Appropriate correction is required.

### ***Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102***

3. The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –

(e) the invention was described in (1) an application for patent, published under section 122(b), by another filed in the United States before the invention by the applicant for patent or (2) a patent granted on an application for patent by another filed in the United States before the invention by the applicant for patent, except that an international application filed under the treaty defined in section 351(a) shall have the effects for purposes of this subsection of an application filed in the United States only if the international application designated the United States and was published under Article 21(2) of such treaty in the English language.

4. Claims 1 and 6 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(e) as being clearly anticipated by United States Patent Application Publication 2003/0085266 to Simon. Simon discloses an envelope (reference item 40), as best seen in Figure 5. The envelope comprises a test strip (reference item 48) located on the back of the envelope that can indicate the presence of one or more pathogens, e.g. bacteria inside the envelope. The test strip can be examined through a hole in the wall of the envelope and shows evidence of contamination using a color change.

***Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103***

5. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

6. Claim 7 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Simon as applied to claim 1 above, and further in view of Robinson, Jr. Simon teaches an envelope with a test strip. The test strip changes color upon contact with certain pathogens. The test strip, as shown in Figure 5, is located on the back side of the envelope. One of ordinary skill in the art would clearly recognize that the test strip can be located anywhere on the envelope, including the front, as long as it does not interfere with standard placement of items such as postage, return address, or the delivery address. However, in the event that such a relocation was not obvious, Robinson teaches an envelope (reference item 20) with a toxin indicator (reference item 10) that is in communication with the interior of the envelope. The indicator shows the presence of contaminants such as various bacteria via a color change. Furthermore, Robinson Jr. teaches that the location of the indicator should be fixed if the envelope was to pass through an automated processing system, but that its location is unimportant in manual processing systems (column 6, lines 42-53). It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention to modify the teachings of Simon with the teachings of Robinson, Jr. to provide an envelope with a test strip capable of indicating the presence of various pathogens inside the envelope wherein the test strip is located on the front of the envelope.

7. Claims 2, 4, and 5 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Simon as applied to claim 1 above, and further in view of United States Patent 4,840,919 to Attar and United States Patent 6,254,846 to Robinson, Jr. Simon teaches an envelope with a test strip. The test strip

Art Unit: 2856

changes color upon contact with certain pathogens. The test strip, as shown in Figure 5, is located on the back side of the envelope. Simon does not teach a test strip mounted on a holder. Mounting the test strip on a holder would have been an obvious modification to the device of Simon. Furthermore, one would be motivated to use a holder so as to avoid contamination of the test region during handling and placement of the test strip in the envelope. To further support this, Attar shows that it is well known to produce test strips (reference item 10) comprising a base (reference item 12) that is larger than the test portion (reference item 22). This test strip changes color in the presence of specific compounds. The fact that the applicant has attached their test strip and holder to a carrier prior to insertion into an envelope is not patentably distinct over the teachings of Simon in view of Attar. The applicant's carrier may provide additional stiffness to the holder, but it does not make the device operate in a new or otherwise novel manner. Furthermore, the use of the carrier may well inhibit the functionality of the test strip as any pathogens present would no longer have direct path to the test strip. Attempts to overcome this deficiency by providing holes on the carrier would also be an obvious modification over the device of Simon in view of Attar. To further support this, Robinson, Jr. teaches that it is known to provide a hole (reference item 14a) on the cover (reference item 14) to allow the air with the pathogens to reach the test portion. One of ordinary skill in the art would know that increased circulation around the test portion increases the likelihood that the pathogens would be detected by the test strip. It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention to modify the teachings of Simon with the teachings of Attar and Robinson, Jr. to provide an envelope with a test strip wherein the test strip is located on a holder so that the integrity of the strip is not compromised during handling and placement.

8. Claim 3 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Simon in view of Attar as applied to claims 1 and 2 above, and further in view of Robinson. Simon in view of Attar teaches an

Art Unit: 2856

envelope with a test strip, wherein the test strip comprises a larger base member upon which is mounted the testing portion. As stated above the larger base portion allows the test strip to be handled and placed in an envelope without compromising the test region. The test strip of Simon is clearly smaller than the envelope. Simon in view of Attar does not teach an envelope with a test strip where the test strip moves inside the envelope. Allowing the test strip to move inside the envelope would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art. It is well known and commonly practiced that smaller items are placed in larger envelopes such that the smaller items move during the mailing process. Doing the same with the test strip does not involve any inventive step. And, as Robinson, Jr. clearly states, "it is unimportant as to where the...indicator is located except that it must be in communication with the interior of the envelope and visible from an exterior of the same" (column 6, lines 49-53). Having the item test strip move would obviously require several more holes in the envelope thereby risking exposure of the contents of the envelope to outdoor environments or other contaminants such as inks from automated processing equipment, spills or leaks from other sources, or damage due to the fact that the holes catch or bind with the automated processing equipment or other items such as clasps on larger envelopes. Furthermore, if the test strip was allowed to move then the envelope would not be useful for automated processing equipment such as the method disclosed by Robinson, Jr. (column 6, lines 42-49) since the test strip would have to be located and examined manually. This would obviously add to the time and expense of mail processing if large quantities of envelopes with movable test strips were handled, with time spent looking for the test strip and then reading the strip, which could then cause exposure of the pathogens to the handler. It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention to modify the teachings of Simon in view of Attar with the teachings of Robinson, Jr. to provide an envelope with a test strip wherein the test strip is allowed to move in the envelope.

Art Unit: 2856

***Conclusion***


9. The prior art made of record and not relied upon is considered pertinent to applicant's disclosure.

a. United States Patent Application Publication 2003/0080550 to Phillips teaches an envelope with a powder detection window located at various regions on the envelope.

10. Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to David A. Rogers whose telephone number is (703) 305-4451. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday - Friday (0730 - 1600).

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Hezron E. Williams can be reached on (703) 305-4705. The fax phone numbers for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned are (703) 308-7722 for regular communications and (703) 872-9319 for After Final communications.

Any inquiry of a general nature or relating to the status of this application or proceeding should be directed to the receptionist whose telephone number is (703) 306-3431.

  
July 7, 2003

HELEN KWOK  
PRIMARY EXAMINER  
